



GOD PROVIDES FOR ELIJAH

LESSON AT A GLANCE

■ New Apostolic Church USA



CURIOSITY

An object lesson, experiment, or activity that sparks curiosity, encourages exploration, and gets kids thinking about the wonder of God.

- Welcome Question: *What is the biggest surprise you've ever experienced?*
- Interactive Game: Who Would've Thought?
- Declaring God's Wonder

BELIEF *Choose either Hear It or Experience It and supplement with the video*

A deep and interactive dive into Scripture that guides kids into knowing God more deeply, exploring His big story, and marveling at His wonder.

- Opening Prayer
- God's Big Story: Hear It, Watch It, Experience It!
- Connecting the Wonder Truth

FAITH

An intentional conversation that helps kids see the wonder of God's story and how it connects to their own, emboldening their faith and fostering a deeper understanding of their place in God's kingdom.

- Discussion Questions for Younger and Older Kids
- Small Group Prayer Time

IDENTITY

An interactive worship response activity that creates space for God to remind kids of these core truths: I am known, I am loved, I am led, and my life can tell of God's wonder.

- Responding in Worship: Popcorn Prayer
- Blessing Your Kids

GOD PROVIDES FOR ELIJAH LESSON 4

NAC USA

Goals and Objectives

[IA 1, 3, 5, 8, 9, 11, 13, 15, 18, 19, 21, 23, 25, 28, 29](#)
[IB 1, 3, 5 IC 1-13 ID 2, 4, 6 IE 1, 2, 3 IIIA 1, 2, 3](#)

WONDER TRUTH:

God Can Provide in Unexpected Ways

SCRIPTURE:

[1 Kings 17](#)

GOD'S BIG STORY:

When the prophet Elijah is in hiding from King Ahab, God demonstrates that He is the one true God by providing for Elijah's needs in unexpected ways.

WORD OF WONDER:

[Ephesians 3:20](#)

"Now all glory to God, who is able, through his mighty power at work within us, to accomplish infinitely more than we might ask or think."

FOR LEADERS

A MESSAGE FOR CHILDREN'S LEADERS

We invite you to pause, listen, and shift your gaze toward the Father...

Dear Sunday School Teachers,

Take a moment to read [1 Kings 17:7-24](#). Reflect on how God has provided for you in unexpected ways. Just as God provided for the widow in a way she could never have imagined, and how His grace, through the hand of another, covered Elijah, resulting in blessings for both, we can trust in God's faithfulness. He often works in ways we cannot foresee.

We, too, can experience God's miraculous provision, though it may come in different forms. Many of us have had our needs met through the love and support of our congregation—through a kind word, a handshake or hug, a financial gift, a card, assistance for ourselves or our children, or a phone call or text message that lifts our spirits.

However, like the widow, we must make our needs known. We need to be willing to say, "This is all I have to give right now," or "I am in need of these things." I believe the same God who provided for the widow will be faithful to make our jars overflow as well.

How has God provided for you in unexpected ways? Take a few moments to thank the Lord today for the miracle of His provision.

With love and joy,

The Faith Arc Team

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A ROAD MAP

WHO?

Elijah was a prophet during the time of King Ahab. God provided for Elijah's needs through ravens and through the unnamed widow of Zarephath. The widow's son was brought back to life through Elijah's prayers.

WHAT?

Israel rebelled against God, and their newest king, Ahab, did more evil things than all the kings before him ([1 Kings 16:30](#)). God caused a famine to come to the land as a consequence of these actions and to convince Ahab that the Lord of Israel is God alone.

WHERE?

Kerith Valley, also known as the Jordan Valley, was located just east of the Jordan River. The city of Zarephath was located between Tyre and Sidon and is known today as Sarafand, Lebanon. It is possible Jesus visited there in His journeys ([Mark 7:24](#)).

WHEN?

Elijah's experience took place during the reign of King Ahab and Queen Jezebel. Ahab was the seventh king of the northern kingdom of Israel and is believed to have reigned between 874–853 BC.

CONNECTING TO GOD'S BIG STORY

Centuries later, Jesus reminded His disciples that God will care for our needs as He does the lilies of the field and the birds of the air. Jesus is our ultimate provision, giving us all we need for eternal life in God by grace through faith ([Ephesians 2:8](#)).

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WELCOME QUESTION

SUPPLIES: paper, colored pencils, whiteboard (optional), dry-erase marker (optional)

Before kids arrive, display the [Welcome Question](#). Invite kids to share with two or three others the story of the biggest surprise they've ever experienced. Be sure to have your own example ready too! If you have younger kids, be sure to read the question for them. Encourage kids who like to draw to illustrate their answers.



As kids arrive, warmly welcome them by name and ask them to Check In.

All Ages

Always begin your class with a warm welcome and a social-emotional “check-in” (on the next page). Use the feelings chart above and ask each child how they are feeling (refrain from asking “How are you?” as children may be accustomed to responding with “fine”). You may want to print and post the feelings chart in your classroom for ease of use.

- Allow each child to name their feeling or to use a color to name their feeling. Older children might use words, younger children might point to the pictures or use the colors to express their feelings.
- There are no wrong feelings and all feelings should be acknowledged.
- Acknowledge how children feel by giving each child time and space to share anything they might need or want to share in regard to their feelings. For example, you can ask “Why are you angry?” or “What made you sad?”.
- If you can, address the feeling (hunger/thirst - provide a snack/drink, sadness - give a hug, joy - give a high five, tired - let the child rest, anger – a calming space, etc.).
- Keep in mind throughout the lesson how each child is feeling and that feelings may change during your time with the child.
- If you notice a change, you may want to allow the child to rename their feeling and again address the feeling if needed.

Acknowledge all feelings, concerns, joys, and celebrations in your opening and closing prayer. Use a grace-based approach to the learning as feelings will impact how children learn (adapted from the Zones of Regulation).

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SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL CHECK IN

Angry



Scared



Panicked



Inconsolable



Happy



Focused



Calm



Proud



Worried



Frustrated



Silly



Excited



Sad



Bored



Tired



Sick



At your start time...

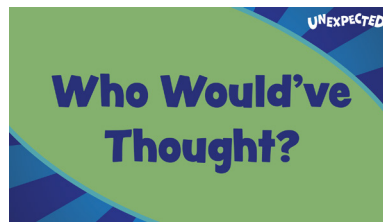
Enthusiastically welcome and gather all kids together as you begin the lesson. Because surprises can be good and bad, use sensitivity as you begin with the Welcome Question. Consider asking for volunteers to answer the Welcome Question: **What is the biggest surprise you've ever experienced?**

Just like many of you shared about surprising experiences in your life, sometimes God can surprise us too. Today in God's big story, we're going to hear about a few times when God provided good things in really unexpected ways. But, first, it's time to be curious.

INTERACTIVE GAME: WHO WOULD'VE THOUGHT?

SUPPLIES: box or container (1 per group of 10–12 kids), random objects (5–10 per group of 10–12 kids)

Ahead of time, fill a box or container for each group of 10–12 kids with random objects from your church or ministry area. Some examples of objects you can put in the boxes are plastic water bottles, rulers, blank sheets of paper, disposable cups, pipe cleaners, etc.



When it's time to begin, display the [Who Would've Thought? Slide](#). For this activity, teams of 5–6 kids will face off in a prop challenge! Designate teams as either team 1 or team 2. Two teams will share each bin of items. (For a large group of kids, you can have multiple groups facing off against each other. You might want a volunteer leader with each group of kids.)

Team 1 will go first. Give the first person on the team a random object. This person needs to use the object in a different way than it's typically used. For example, he could roll up a sheet of paper and pretend he is a pirate with a telescope looking for treasure. Then he will hand the paper to the next person, and she needs to use it in a completely different way. The team will go until they run out of ways to use the object. Then Team 2 will compete with a different object. The team that uses its object in more different ways will win that round. Teams can play multiple rounds depending on how long each round takes.

Just as we came up with new uses for these objects that we never would've expected, God can work through people and things in different ways too. We can trust God to provide because we know He is a good God who provides for His people. Sometimes it looks different than we expect because God is able to do much more than we can even imagine; He can surprise us! Display the [Elijah Wonder Truth Slide](#). Today's Wonder Truth is: **GOD CAN PROVIDE IN UNEXPECTED WAYS.**

Make It Inclusive: *Performing in front of others can trigger anxiety in some people. If kids are uncomfortable taking a turn, that's OK! They can simply say "pass" and still enjoy watching others' creativity.*

Teaching Tip:

For Younger Kids: Consider eliminating the competition between teams by telling kids how to use each object you supply. A few examples include: a water bottle as a microphone, a ruler as a guitar, a sheet of paper as a telescope, a cup as a hat, and a pipe cleaner as a snake. After all the objects have been used in a new way, kids can vote for the one they like the best.



DECLARING GOD'S WONDER

Display the [Elijah Declaration Slide](#). Read each line boldly and invite kids to repeat after you.

Thank You, God, that You are good! (Kids repeat.)

You made me on purpose, for a purpose. (Kids repeat.)

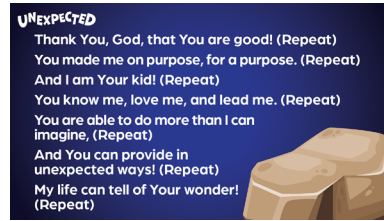
And I am Your kid! (Kids repeat.)

You know me, love me, and lead me. (Kids repeat.)

You are able to do more than I can imagine, (Kids repeat.)

And You can provide in unexpected ways! (Kids repeat.)

My life can tell of Your wonder! (Kids repeat.)



OPENING PRAYER

Before entering into God’s big story, lead kids in an opening prayer. Use the prayer here or your own words: Father, thank You for this time to hear Your story from the Bible. We ask Your Holy Spirit to help us to understand Your great love for us—Your kids. Guide us to see all the ways You provide for us every day. We thank You most of all for giving us the gift of Jesus! In Jesus’ name, Amen.

GOD’S BIG STORY

This lesson includes three opportunities for your kids to enter the story – we recommend you choose **HEAR IT!** or **EXPERIENCE IT!** and supplement with the **WATCH IT!** video. **HEAR IT!** is read directly from the Bible. **EXPERIENCE IT!** is an interactive story-telling activity.

Hear It!

SUPPLIES: Bibles (1 per kid)

Explain to kids they are going to read in the Bible an example of God providing. Invite them to open their Bibles to [1 Kings 17](#). Explain that 1 Kings is in the Old Testament and tells the true story of different leaders in Israel’s history. Display the [Elijah Title Slide](#).

Let’s start by reading part of God’s big story directly from the Bible. Afterward, we will watch and experience more of the story!

Ahead of time, invite six confident readers to read part of today’s passage out loud for the group. Provide the readers with their specific verse numbers so they can look over the verses before reading out loud: [1 Kings 17:7–11, 17:12, 17:13–14, 17:15–17, 17:19–21, 17:22–23](#). When you’re ready to begin, invite the readers to read their assigned verses aloud while the rest of the kids follow along. For groups with mainly beginning readers, consider inviting a leader to read the whole passage.

Watch It!

Watch the [God Provides for Elijah God’s Big Story Video!](#)



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Experience It!

SUPPLIES: [Zoom-Out Slides](#)

Ahead of time, open the [Zoom-Out Slides](#) and prepare to display them. As an alternative, print the [Zoom-Out Sheets](#).

Gather kids together and display the first [Zoom-Out Slide](#) (or [Zoom-Out Sheet](#)).

We are going to hear an amazing part of God's big story from the Bible showing us that sometimes things aren't quite as they seem. Be listening for unexpected events, and be ready to help tell the story!

After God freed the people of Israel from slavery in Egypt and brought them to the land of promise, they had God for their King. But over time, the people begged God to give them a human king like all the other nations around them. Reluctantly, God agreed, but the first king—Saul—didn't stay true to God. The second king—David, the man after God's own heart—was a much better king, and so was his son, Solomon. But after that, just as God had warned, most of Israel's kings worshiped other gods. They didn't lead God's people well or follow His ways. So God raised up prophets, or messengers, to share His message with His people. Elijah was a prophet during the rule of King Ahab, a terrible king who didn't love God and who worshiped idols.

God gave a message to Elijah to inform King Ahab of something that would happen to prove God is alive and powerful. This picture on our screen shows you the message God gave Elijah. Can you figure out the message? Advance to the next [Zoom-Out Slide 2](#) and allow kids a few guesses at what's in the picture. This is pretty hard. What about now? Advance to the [Zoom-Out Slide 3](#). Once kids have tried guessing, advance the [Zoom-Out Slide 4](#) again and see if kids recognize the object. Then advance to the [Zoom-Out Slide 5](#) of the object and allow kids to shout out what they see. Yes! It's a drop of water! God had Elijah inform King Ahab that there wouldn't be any rain or dew for several years.

Well, this made King Ahab angry, so Elijah went to hide from him in the Kerith Valley. At the same time God told Elijah to go, God also told Elijah how He would provide for him. God stopped the rain, but He also led Elijah to a little brook that had enough water for him to drink.

What did Elijah eat? Without rain, food can't grow, but God provided another way for Elijah to have food. Let's take a look at another unexpected way God provided for Elijah. Advance to the next [Zoom-Out Slide 6](#). Allow kids to guess what the image is, then advance the [Zoom-Out Slide 7](#). Continuing advancing the [Zoom-Out Slide 8](#) until the [Zoom-Out Slide 9](#) of this object is displayed, allowing kids to share their guesses. Yes, it's a bird! Do you know what kind of bird it is? Pause for kids to share. It's a raven. God sent ravens every day with food for Elijah to eat. I didn't expect ravens to be how God provided food for Elijah!

When the little brook dried up, it was time for Elijah to leave the valley. God told him, "Go and live in the village of Zarephath, near the city of Sidon. I have instructed a widow there to feed you." [\(1 Kings 17:9\)](#)

Elijah traveled to Zarephath where he met a widow, a woman whose husband had died. Elijah asked her, "Would you please bring me a little water in a cup?" [\(1 Kings 17:10\)](#). Elijah also asked the widow for something else. Look at this image [\(Zoom-Out Slide 10\)](#) and see if you can guess what Elijah wanted. Display the next [Zoom-Out Slide 11](#), and [Zoom-Out Slide 12](#) and allow kids to guess what the image is. Advance to [Zoom-Out Slide 13](#), allowing kids to share their guesses.

**ZOOM
OUT!**

Wonder Ink

LESSON 4 ZOOM-OUT SHEETS BELIEF



ELEMENTARY

Yes! Elijah asked the widow for bread. The widow was sad, though. But she said, “I swear by the Lord your God that I don’t have a single piece of bread in the house. And I have only a handful of flour left in the jar and a little cooking oil in the bottom of the jug. I was just gathering a few sticks to cook this last meal, and then my son and I will die.” ([1 Kings 17:12](#)).

Wow! That seems like a really sad story, except that’s not the way God let the story end. He provided for Elijah again. Let’s see if you can guess the unexpected way God provided. Advance to the next [Zoom-Out Slide 14](#). Allow kids to guess as you advance the slides to [Zoom-Out Slide 15](#), [16](#), [17](#).

Yes! That’s a jar like the woman used to hold her flour. Do you know what God did with that jar? Listen to what Elijah told the woman. “For this is what the Lord, the God of Israel, says: There will always be flour and olive oil left in your containers until the time when the Lord sends rain and the crops grow again!” ([1 Kings 17:14](#)). The widow believed God’s words. She went home and made Elijah some bread with the last of the flour and oil. When she looked in the jar after feeding Elijah, there was still more flour and more oil. In fact, “There was always enough flour and olive oil left in the containers, just as the Lord had promised through Elijah.” ([1 Kings 17:16](#)). God kept His word!

You all did a really great job looking at the images that weren’t quite as they seemed. We’ve learned God worked in some really unexpected ways! And the story is not over yet! A little while later, something very sad happened. The widow’s son got very sick and even stopped breathing! The widow was heartbroken. She questioned Elijah and all that had happened. Elijah took the boy to the upstairs room and cried out to the Lord. “O Lord my God, why have you brought tragedy to this widow who has opened her home to me, causing her son to die? ...O Lord my God, please let this child’s life return to him.” ([1 Kings 17:20-21](#)).

God heard Elijah’s prayer. Suddenly, the boy took a deep breath. He was alive! Elijah took the boy to his mother and declared, “Look! he said. Your son is alive!” ([1 Kings 17:23](#)). The woman was overjoyed and realized all that Elijah had done and said was from God. God can provide in unexpected ways!



CONNECTING THE WONDER TRUTH

Display the [Elijah Wonder Truth Slide](#). Pose the following question to kids to help them connect the Wonder Truth to God’s big story:

Our Wonder Truth today is GOD CAN PROVIDE IN UNEXPECTED WAYS. Where did you see our Wonder Truth in the story? Allow kids to answer freely.



Over 800 years after God provided for Elijah in unexpected ways, Jesus reminded His disciples that God cares for our needs as He does the lilies of the fields and birds of the air. Jesus is God’s ultimate and unexpected provision for us. Through God’s gift of Jesus and His death and resurrection, we have the hope of eternal life with God.

The widow was willing to provide for Elijah’s needs and Elijah made sure the widow and her son had what they needed. God wants His children to serve each other and help to take care of each other’s needs, even before our own needs. Ask the children how they serve in their families, in their community, and in their congregation. Consider leading a service project in the congregation to help support others who may lack basic resources during the holidays.

This may be an opportunity to discuss the service for the departed. Share with children how God wants all humans to be saved, even those in eternity. Explain that souls in eternity are no longer with us on earth, but we can help to care for them by praying for them, loving them, and remembering them. God cares for them by allowing them to hear His word, and to partake in the sacraments.

God gave us the Ten Commandments to help us make good decisions in our lives. The eighth commandment says “You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.” This commandment means you should always tell the truth and never lie about other people. When you tell the truth, people can trust you. If you lie, especially about someone else, it can hurt them and cause big problems. This commandment is all about being truthful and treating others with fairness and kindness. When we follow this rule, we help make our communities and friendships strong and trusting. Allow time for the kids to say the commandment chorally (everyone saying it together) and individually, if they wish to do so. Ask the kids how they can demonstrate honesty within their families and with friends.

Teaching Tips:

Young children are just beginning to understand the concept of life and death but may struggle with abstract concepts like life after death. Keep explanations simple, focusing on reassurance and love. Older children may ask more detailed questions and can understand more complex ideas. Keep the conversations gentle and age-appropriate. Be honest about what we believe but avoid overwhelming details.

ELEMENTARY

Divide your group into smaller groups based on age. If your group is already small, stay together for this time.

QUESTIONS: YOUNGER KIDS

- In God's big story today, what is one way God provides for Elijah?
- Why does the widow tell Elijah she can't share any bread with him?
- What miracles does God provide for the widow and her son?
- If you were the widow, would you have trusted Elijah that God would provide more flour and oil? Why or why not?
- Is it hard or easy for you to trust that God will take care of you? Why?
- What is one way you want to trust God this week?

It's not always easy to trust God, especially when things don't seem to be going our way. However, we saw in Elijah's life that sometimes God provides in unexpected ways. Let's pray to God right now, thanking Him that we can trust Him to provide.

Make It Inclusive: Kids in your group likely come from varying backgrounds. Some may have never known physical want while others might be familiar with hunger and experience anxiety over where their next meal will come from. Be intentional not to make promises of physical comfort and needs. Instead, remind kids that God is with them always and can provide in ways we would never guess!

PRAYER TIME: YOUNGER KIDS

Open your prayer time by thanking God for being a God we can trust to provide for us. Invite kids to share their praises—what are they thankful for—and prayer requests—who or what are they praying for. Then pray for each child by name. Consider asking for volunteers ahead of time to pray for those who shared ways they wanted to trust God this week.

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QUESTIONS: OLDER KIDS

- In God's big story today, why is Elijah hiding?
- What are the different ways God provides for Elijah during this time?
- What happens to the widow's son? What does Elijah do in response?
- Elijah and the widow had to trust God each day that the flour and oil would not run out. Why can trusting God daily be difficult?
- Is it easy or hard for you to trust God? Why?
- What is something you can do to help you remember that God will take care of you?

God shows Elijah that He can provide in some really unexpected ways! This part of God's big story can encourage us that when life gets tough, God still cares for us. We just might be surprised by how He does it! Let's take time to pray and thank God for providing for us.

PRAYER TIME: OLDER KIDS

Invite kids into a time of prayer. Allow kids to share their requests about how they need God to provide and share praises for those ways God already has provided. Ask volunteers to pray for these requests and to thank God for providing in unexpected ways.

RESPONDING IN WORSHIP: POPCORN PRAYER

SUPPLIES: none

Gather kids together. Display the [Responding in Worship Slide](#). Help kids form a circle, either as one large group or in groups of 10–12, depending on what works best in your space.



In God's big story today, we heard about the different and unexpected ways God provided for Elijah. I imagine it could've been a little scary to trust that God would provide food each day through ravens or that the jar of flour and jug of oil wouldn't run out even after the widow used it to make bread. Elijah had to have faith and trust with his heart that God would come through.

Like Elijah, we have examples from our own lives of how God provides in unexpected ways. We're going to take some time to think about some of those ways and praise God for them. When we take time to remember all God has done for us, it becomes easier to have faith that He will continue to provide for us. Take a minute to think, and then we will share our thoughts in a few words, popcorn-style. That means you can share your ideas one after another without going in any set order. As we share the ways God has provided, allow these words to be a form of praise, telling God we adore Him for who He is and for His goodness.

You may want to give kids a few ideas to get them started. For example, they could say "kind teachers" or "a warm home." Consider selecting one volunteer to start the popcorn prayer, and then allow kids to continue until most have contributed. Assure kids it's OK if they share the same words someone else shared. When the prayer has stopped "popping," you may add in your own adoration and then close the prayer.

God has taken care of us in so many different ways! How does it make you feel when you think of these different ways God has provided for you? Let's tell God in a popcorn prayer of thanksgiving. We'll go in no particular order, and when you're ready to share, you can share how you feel after hearing all these different and sometimes unexpected ways God provides. For example, I might say the word "grateful" or "loved." Let's share how blessed we are to have a God who cares for us!

Allow kids to share their prayers of thanksgiving for all the unexpected ways God provides for them. Assure kids it's OK if they share the same word someone else shared. After completing these prayers, sing together one of the songs from the [Unexpected Elementary Spotify playlist](#).

Make It Inclusive: For those kids who are especially shy or might have difficulty speaking in front of groups, consider pairing them with a trusted friend or providing them another means of expression. For example, they can whisper their prayers to this friend, who can then share with the group, or they can write down their praise for the leader to share.

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Disclaimer: We have permission from the publisher to use the Spotify music playlist solely for the purposes of the Sunday School hour, Vacation Bible School experiences, fellowship events, or for listening at home. Please note that this playlist is not to be used during the divine service or for any streamed or broadcasted occasion.

BLESSING YOUR KIDS

Display the [Elijah Blessing Slide](#). Speak this blessing over your kids, as a group or as individuals. If you bless kids individually, insert each name into the blessing.

Blessing: May God see your needs and provide for you in unexpected ways. As He does so, may your faith grow, for your Father in heaven loves you and cares for you. Praise God for He is good! He can do more than we imagine!

